

**Testimony of Joseph Wasserman of Connecticut Coalition for Environmental
Justice**

Before the Connecticut General Assembly Public Health Committee

February 28, 2014

**Testimony in support of SB 126, An Act Concerning Children's Exposure to
Chemicals**

I wish to thank all the members of the Public Health Committee for the opportunity to give testimony today.

My name is Joseph Wasserman and I am a Community Organizer with Connecticut Coalition for Environmental Justice. I speak today in support of SB 126, an Act Concerning Children's Exposure to Chemicals.

Science is finding that many toxic chemicals effect our health and future well being at lower and lower levels. What had been considered safe before is all too often, is no longer considered safe. We see higher and higher cancer rates among children, higher autism rates and higher and higher asthma rates. Study after study links many of the toxic chemicals we are exposed to in everyday products to these health problems. Children are among the most vulnerable to the negative health effects of toxic chemicals that are found in everyday products.

When these everyday products are incinerated, in places like Hartford and Bridgeport, these dangerous toxins are released into the air. Thus Low Income Communities of Color in these urban areas are exposed again to these toxins by breathing the air. This is all the more reason we need SB126, which will create a process whereby chemicals of high concern are identified and create recommendations for action to protect children and our community.

We should not take chances with the health of our children. We have the right to know what chemicals are in the products we buy for our children. SB 126 will inform us about the presence of chemicals in children's products and the risk these chemicals pose.

No additional budget allocation is being requested for this legislation

Court of Common Council

16



CITY OF HARTFORD

560 MAIN STREET

HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06103

J. Wasserman

Shawn T. Wooden, Council President
Alexander Aponte, Majority Leader
Larry Deutsch, Minority Leader

John V. Bazzano, Town and City Clerk

Kyle K. Anderson, Councilman
Joel Cruz, Jr., Councilman
Raúl De Jesús, Jr., Councilman
Cynthia R. Jennings, Councilwoman
Kenneth H. Kennedy, Jr., Councilman
David MacDonald, Councilman

SB 126

April 9, 2013

This is to certify that at a meeting of the Court of Common Council, April 8, 2013, the following RESOLUTION was passed as AMENDED.

Whereas, The Coalition for a Safe & Healthy Connecticut and the Connecticut Coalition for Environmental Justice have worked tirelessly to implement environmental protections in Connecticut and throughout the United States; and

Whereas, They have brought to our attention that there are toxic chemicals in everyday products—in our bodies, homes, workplaces, and communities; and

Whereas, Fewer than 5% of the more than 80,000 synthetic chemicals in commerce have been tested for safety; and

Whereas, A developing fetus and children are particularly vulnerable to toxic chemical exposure; and

Whereas, Common ingredients in plastics and toys have been shown to disrupt hormone systems, harm child brain and sexual development, and impair long-term memory; and

Whereas, Many personal care products like shampoo, bubble bath, lotion and diaper creams have ingredients that are known or suspected to cause cancer, birth defects and reproductive damage; and

Whereas, Because there has been intense industry opposition and Congressional inaction, Connecticut organizations such as the Coalition for a Safe & Healthy Connecticut and the Connecticut Coalition for Environmental Justice continue to defend the vulnerable from toxic chemical exposure as Connecticut citizens are demanding more health protective policies; and

Whereas, Connecticut has already proven to be a leader on environmental health issues by banning bisphenol-A (BPA) in certain consumer products, including many that infants and babies are exposed to, thus paving the way for federal action in this area; and

Whereas, There is still work to be done to ensure the health and safety of Connecticut's children; and

Whereas, It would take many decades to ban one dangerous chemical at a time, now therefore, be it

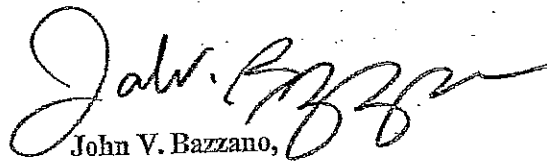
Resolved, That the City of Hartford Court of Common Council recognizes the importance of protecting the health & development of our local families and supports the state's efforts in identifying and phasing out dangerous toxic chemicals in children's products. Be it Further

Resolved, That the City of Hartford Court of Common Council is going on record as calling for strong legislation that will address this important issue in a more comprehensive fashion by creating a process for determining chemicals of high concern and a plan to replace them with safer alternatives; and be it still further

Resolved, That the City of Hartford Court of Common Council supports the above referenced Resolution, and will also support proposed state legislation intended to address this issue.

- HB 6526 An Act Concerning Children's Product and Chemicals of High Concern.
- HB 6332 An Act Concerning Toxic Fire Retardants in Children's Products.
- SB 16 An Act Concerning Requiring Labeling of all Food and Drink Packaging containing Bisphenol-A.

Attest:


John V. Bazzano,
City Clerk.

Bill Numbers
will need to
be updated